

# Health Officers Keep Vigil to Maintain Restaurant Cleanliness

**ROY O. GILBERT, M.D.**  
(L. A. County Health Officer)

So many restaurants serve good and nutritious food in attractive surroundings that patrons are sometimes inclined to pay less attention to food sanitation practices than they should.

But individuals pay for "safe" food as well, and it is their right to demand certain sanitary practices that will eliminate the possibility of contracting any food-borne disease. Fortunately, by a few simple observations, the customer can pretty well judge whether or not the food is safe to eat.

Does the waitress touch butter patties with her fingers? Does she or the bus boy use their fingers to pick up four or five glasses by the inside rim? Do women workers wear a head covering of some sort? Is the silver dirty or is there lipstick on the cups?

Poor supervision. If so, there is a good chance that the restaurant is one in which poor supervision permits

faults to exist. And if present in front, chances are that the laxity is far greater behind the scenes.

Health officers are certainly among the most important vehicles in the transmission of disease to customers.

According to the U. S. Public Health Service, at least 25 communicable diseases can be spread through the improper preparation and serving of food. These include both minor and serious intestinal disorders, the common cold, typhoid fever, and strep infections. Many of these diseases are called "filth" diseases in medical literature and the name just happens to be particularly apt.

Knowledge Needed. One of the functions of a health department is to provide basic knowledge to food industry employees in regard to communicable disease control, food sanitation, and related subject matter. This is no small task in Los Angeles County where, in addition to restaurant personnel in an estimated 40,000 eating places, food handler training is also supplied to

workers in school cafeterias and institutions.

The educational work has been successfully approached through a series of Food Handler Institutes which are conducted with the cooperation of culinary unions, restaurant owners, and other concerned groups.

Attendance Voluntary. Attendance at these courses is on a voluntary basis, however, and the majority of restaurants throughout the County display awards when 75 per cent of the employees have enrolled at these free training sessions. Even when such instructions are received, however,

safe food must always depend on the conscientious techniques of the individual worker.

This educational program offered by health departments is one means of teaching thousands of new food establishment employees the responsibility they have in contributing to public health. Cooks, managers, and other workers also find it useful to repeat the course as one means to keep abreast of current developments in equipment and methods.

Practice Safety. Considering that perhaps two million Los Angeles County citizens dine out at least once a day, the elimination of the danger of eating away from home is a real achievement in public health. Family and community health are to a considerable extent, dependent on the successful maintenance of high standards in restaurant sanitation.

The results of Food Handler Training may also be reflected in the current statistics of reportable diseases recorded in the County. So far this year, out of a total of nearly 800 cases of salmonella and food poisoning, only a handful were traceable to restaurants. The

great majority occurred at community affairs where food was served by volunteers who only occasionally work at the preparation of food in large quantities.

This trend in what might be called the "lay" source of food-borne diseases has been persistent for the last several years. This group is also in need of training similar to that required by the professional food handler.

Institutes Open. To meet this need, the institutes are now open to representatives of clubs, church, or other community organizations that occasionally serve food.

Last year the response from these groups was gratifyingly large, and it can be predicted that outbreaks of illness from

and wherever he dines out, the customer should be confident that the food is also safe to eat.

A scheduled 14 food handler institutes to be held during the coming months at various locations in the jurisdiction of the County Health Dept. may be obtained by a request to the Bureau of Sanitation, Los Angeles County Health Dept., 241 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 12.

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## Successful Use of 'Drivotrainer' Reported in Los Angeles Schools

Successful use of a revolutionary classroom trainer that cuts the cost of teaching high school students to drive was reported to the Los Angeles City Board of Education recently.

On a battery of scientific tests, students trained with the new device, called the Aetna Drivotrainer, proved to be on a par with those who took the conventional course in real cars.

Details of a research program utilizing the Drivotrainer were presented to Board members in an 84-page report by Superintendent of Schools Claude L. Reeves.

The experiment was conducted at Hollywood High School, with a group of 120 students being taught driving fundamentals on the classroom machine and then compared with a similar group which took the regular instructional program in standard automobiles.

Part of Research. The experiment is a part of a nationwide research program sponsored by the Aetna Casualty and Surety Co., which developed the device in an effort to meet the needs of schools for an effective, economical way of teaching youths to drive.

Other studies are still in progress in the New York City schools and at Iowa State Teachers College.

Introduced several years ago, the Drivotrainer attracted nationwide interest among educators as a possible answer to the high cost of driver training. A summary of the Los Angeles report is being sent to 5000 school administrators to familiarize them with results of the research study.

## Man Admits Burglary of Store Safe

Los Angeles Police are holding John T. Vasquez, 21, of 965 W. 12th St., Los Angeles, for Torrance authorities on suspicion of burglary after the suspect walked into the Wilshire Division headquarters, LAPD and gave himself up.

Vasquez told officers he was involved in the safe haulaway job at Glen's Auto Parts, 1324 Cabrillo Ave., here last Monday night. A 200-pound safe was stolen during the night from the auto concern. It contained \$50 in cash and a number of papers.

M. T. Blanchard, a clerk at the auto parts store, reported the safe loss to local police early Tuesday morning when he reported for work.

Paddocks and a set of keys to the firm were taken also, according to police reports of the break-in.

Torrance detectives are investigating Vasquez' admission of the burglary.

Driver attitudes, recognized as a major underlying cause of highway accidents, is one of two areas where Drivotrainer students made a better showing.

As a result of the study, the report states, "there is a greater awareness of the infinite scope of the contribution the Aetna Drivotrainer may make to the field of driver education."

With the Drivotrainer at Hollywood High, on which 480 students can be trained a year, per pupil costs would be reduced 15 per cent, but a larger unit designed to handle 900 would double the rate at which costs could be cut, producing yearly savings of nearly \$12,000, the report shows.

Helps Reduce Costs. In submitting the report to the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools Claude L. Reeves observed that in addition to reducing costs the Drivotrainer may help meet teacher shortages, provide an added safety measure for beginning drivers, and be "most advantageous in standardizing teaching procedures and course content."

Two hundred forty students participated in the Los Angeles study, which was directed by Cecil G. Zaun, Los Angeles City Schools safety supervisor.

"Results indicate that practically the same progress in driving skill and knowledge will be experienced by a student trained by either the experimental method, using the Aetna Drivotrainer plus three hours of on-the-road training, or the California State prescribed course," the report states. California's standard course calls for six hours on-the-road training.

On two of four tests used to measure student performance at the beginning and end of the program, Drivotrainer students showed significantly greater improvement. On the other tests and on a road exam given only at the end of the course, there was no significant difference in the two groups.

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Elks Charity Ball Set Here December 3

The second annual Elks Charity Ball, sponsored by the local chapter of BPOE, has been set for Saturday night, Dec. 3, at Alan Richard Hall, 1951 Carson St., an Elks' spokesman said this week.

A television set will be awarded to a ticketholder at the dance.

Tickets for the affair may be purchased from any Elks member. Proceeds go to Christmas charity work.

IN KOREA . . . Pfc. Gerald R. Jones, son of Clyde F. Jones, of 1606 Gramercy, is a member of a Marine maintenance squad, which takes care of the engines of all planes operated by the USMC in Korea. Jones entered the service in August, 1954. He attended Narbonne High School.

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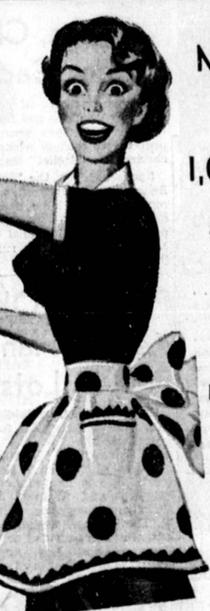
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